



U.S. Department of Justice

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MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
April 13, 2005

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**SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE
HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA ("HIDTA") TASK FORCE**

**THIRD MEMBER OF SALEM, NH/LAWRENCE, MA "CRACK" COCAINE RING
SENTENCED ON FEDERAL DISTRIBUTION CHARGES**

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono and DEA Resident Agent in Charge Leo Ducey announced that **Ramon SURIEL, 35**, of Lawrence, MA was sentenced today on crack cocaine distribution charges.

On November 23, 2004, SURIEL entered a guilty plea before U.S. District Court Judge Joseph DiClerico to an information charging him with possession with intent to distribute over 50 grams of cocaine base, aka "crack" cocaine.

According to affidavits accompanying federal criminal complaints issued by U.S. Magistrate Judge James Muirhead during June and July, 2004, SURIEL was part of a four-person drug distribution network that sold "crack" cocaine to an undercover DEA Special Agent during the spring and summer of 2004 in Salem, NH and Methuen, MA.

At today's sentencing, Judge DiClerico imposed a sentence of 72 months imprisonment followed by a 3-year period of supervised release during which SURIEL's behavior will be monitored by the U.S. Department of Probation. SURIEL also faces deportation to his native Dominican Republic.

Also sentenced to federal prison as a result of charges arising from the investigation were:

- Opinio PENA, 45, of Lawrence, MA (60 months imprisonment); and
- Carmen LLAURADOR, aka Carmen Diaz, 36, of Lawrence, MA (100 months imprisonment).

Co-defendant Lizette HERNANDEZ, 36, of Lawrence, MA faces sentencing on May 16, 2005.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, “This Office is committed to aggressively prosecuting drug traffickers operating in New Hampshire’s cities and also those importing illegal drugs into New Hampshire over the Massachusetts border. The Southern New Hampshire HIDTA Task Force conducted a thorough and aggressive investigation in this case.”

The conviction resulted from the Southern New Hampshire HIDTA Task Force, located at DEA’s New Hampshire headquarters, with assistance from the Lawrence, MA Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by First Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante, the Lead Attorney for the District of New Hampshire in the New England Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (“New England OCDETF”).

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